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August 29, 1902

2010

EGYPT.

The outbreak of cholera at Moucha.

[No. 258.]

CAIRO, EGYPT, July 22, 1902.

SIR: Confirming my telegram of the 21st instant, as follows:

SECRETARY OF STATE, Washington, D. C.: Cholera outbreak Moucha near Assiout.—
LONG.

I now have with much regret to report to the Department that an outbreak of Asiatic cholera at the village of Moucha near Assiout in upper Egypt, 250 miles south of Cairo, was officially declared yesterday.

The first suspicious cases occurred on the 15th instant and the sanitary department sent a physician the same night to Assiout. Specimens sent to Cairo for bacteriological examination persistently gave negative reactions and on the 17th another physician of the sanitary department was sent to make a bacteriological examination on the spot, the result of which was a telegraphic report of the existence of cholera at Moucha.

The following is the text of the bulletin issued by the sanitary department for the twenty-four hours ended yesterday at noon: Existing cases, 52; fresh cases, 7; deaths out of hospital, 8; remaining under treatment, 51; cases from July 15 to date, 154. Total deaths, 103.

The village of Moucha contains 8,000 or 10,000 inhabitants, and is situated about 7 miles south of Assiout, in the center of a large basin. The inhabitants depend on surface wells for their water supply. These wells have been closed by the authorities, and Abyssinian pumps, in charge of a competent engineer, furnish a temporary water supply while the infected wells remain closed. Dr. Graham, director general, in his official notification says:

"Every effort is being made to localize the outbreak, and in view of the isolated position of the village and its remoteness from the Nile and the canal system of Egypt, hopes are entertained that the spread of infection may be limited."

A strong military cordon around the infected district is maintained, and nurses, ambulances, medicines, and everything which may be useful in combating the dreadful disease is provided.

The ministry of war has been notified of the absolute necessity of suspending all recruiting operations in the Assiout Province, and although the information is not yet official, it is expected that all Turkish ports, and probably Piraeus, Brindisi, and Naples will impose a prohibitive quarantine on arrivals from Egypt.

By decree issuing from the ministry of the interior, the province of Assiout is officially declared to be infected by cholera.

Respectfully,

JOHN G. LONG,
United States Agent and Consul-General.

The ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE.

ENGLAND.

Means adopted by the city of Liverpool to promote the health of the poor.

LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND, August 7, 1902.

SIR: I have the honor to make the following report on some of the methods adopted by the city of Liverpool to promote health and cleanliness among its slum population.

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Sterilized humanized milk depots.

With a view to lessening disease common to infants due to improper feeding, and decreasing the infantile mortality, which in some districts of the city is very high, the corporation has established plants for the proper mixing and sterilization of cows' milk so that it will be as nearly as possible like human milk. It is intended especially for infants of the poorer classes, whose mothers are unable to suckle them, and milk is furnished at such a reasonable figure that the poorest can benefit by it.

Twenty-four's supply of milk can be procured for 5 cents, or by the week, 30 cents. This charge is not sufficient to cover the expenses of the establishment, but there is no reason why it should not be self supporting and yet be within reach of the poorest.

There are different mixtures used, to be given according to the age of the child. They are as follows:

Age.	Milk.	Water.	Cream.	Sugar.	Salt.	Amount, 24 hours.
	Gall.	Gall.	Oz.	Oz.	Oz.	Oz.
One to two weeks.....	6	6	30	18	2	13
Two to eight weeks.....	6	6	30	18	2	27
Two to three months.....	7½	4½	30	20	2	31
Three to five months.....	7½	4½	30	20	2	40
Five to seven months.....	9	3	30	20	2	52

Each morning the pure and the modified milks are tested to see that the proper amount of cream is present. The prepared milk to be distributed is then put in bottles and placed in the sterilizer for one-half hour at a temperature of 190° to 210° F. in summer and a lower temperature in winter. The bottles, supplied with patent stoppers, are then taken out and tightly stoppered and are put into baskets containing 9 bottles each, a sufficient quantity for one day's feeding.

When the bottles are returned, they are placed in hot water containing soda, then mechanically cleansed inside by means of a revolving brush, and finally rinsed in clean cold water and allowed to drain on racks. They are then ready for refilling. Two rubber teats are supplied to each person using the milk.

At the time of commencing the use of the milk, the name of the child, weight, and other necessary data are taken, together with the family history, which is especially directed toward finding out the presence of tuberculosis or other malady which might be the cause of the offspring inheriting a weak constitution or actual disease. Every two weeks the infant is weighed, so that the benefit resulting from the milk may be noted. Many have shown a very satisfactory increase in weight, while only a few have had to discontinue its use because of its disagreeing.

There are at present 2 depots where the milk is prepared, one turning out about 3,500 bottles per day and the other, the most recently established, about 3,000 bottles.

The idea has not been in use a sufficient length of time to determine to what extent it will save the infant population of the city from an untimely death; yet it is certainly a step in the right direction, and one may reasonably expect good results to accrue therefrom.

Corporation dwellings.

The corporation dwellings are houses erected by the city in place of those that have been condemned and demolished as unsanitary and unfit for human habitation.

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The most insanitary dwellings are those occupying the courts. There are about 12 houses to a court, each house having 2 or 3 rooms built one above another. The rooms are saturated with exhalations from the skin and lungs of dirty or sickly people, and there is no means of ventilation except 1 window, which, opening as it does on a foul, narrow court, serves very poorly for that purpose. There is no running water or water-closet in the house, but from 2 to 4 closets are built at the end of the court, and a hydrant is placed in the court to be used in common by all the families living therein. The closets are each used by from 4 to 6 families, men, women, and children. They are not flush closets, and are frequently very dirty, some of them that I saw being extremely filthy, despite the efforts of the sanitary authorities. * * *

As a contrast, the corporation dwellings are as a bed of roses in a field of weeds. They are substantially built of brick, 2 stories in height, each story having a separate means of access to the street, so that one family can occupy one floor and one the other without interfering with each other. There are about 3 rooms and a scullery to each story, and a small yard in the rear to be used in common for drying clothes. This does away with the bad idea of building houses back to back as in the insanitary slum property. There is a stationary bin provided for refuse, so that it can be conveniently collected and burned up in the destructor. More important, each family has a separate flush closet and a sink with running water. The different rows of houses vary a little as to the means of entrance, number of rooms, etc., but all are so arranged that each family has a separate closet and sink, and this, with the increased facilities for light and ventilation, makes them pleasant and healthy habitations.

The first structures erected were on the style of tenement houses. They are 4 stories in height and built in the form of a hollow square, the center being open and used as a playground. As above, each family has the use of 1 closet, and besides there is a laundry provided for each 4 families. The method of building rows of single houses is at present the most favored and is probably the most satisfactory.

At the time of building, the street is widened and well paved.

In none of the corporation dwellings did I see dirty water-closets, and in the majority of instances the rooms were clean.

The problem of getting rid of insanitary property and supplying modern sanitary dwellings for the evicted tenants has been a mighty one and has cost a great deal of money. There is still much to be done in the way of demolition, although some of the dirtiest places, where fever was always present, have disappeared, and newer and healthier structures now occupy the sites. No doubt the main cause of the decrease of typhus fever in late years is modern methods of disinfection and isolation, but I think some credit must be given to the demolition of insanitary dwellings, because the fewer breeding centers there are the fewer will be the number of typhus cases.

Public washhouses.

The washhouses are places where people who have no facilities for washing their clothes at home can do so at a public laundry at a minimum expense. The first one was put into operation in 1842, and since then they have been increased in numbers and brought up to date. The charge for the first hour is 2 cents, 3 cents an hour for the next three hours, and 12 cents an hour thereafter. It will be seen that for about 8 cents a woman can utilize the washhouse for three hours, a sufficient

length of time to wash all the clothes she is likely to have. In the past a charge of about 2 cents an hour was made, no matter how long the woman remained, but this led those who washed for a living to monopolize a stall for sometimes an entire day, while others who simply wished to wash their personal effects had to wait or go without. Since a greater charge has been made after the fourth hour very few remain longer than that, and therefore more people can avail themselves of the opportunities offered.

A stationary tub with hot and cold water is furnished each person. There are provided centrifugal machines in which the wet clothes are put to take out the excess of water, and also drying closets, one for each person. In some of the washhouses, mangles and irons are supplied.

Public baths.

The public baths are also very fine institutions, for they furnish the poor the means of taking a bath for the small sum of 4 cents. This may either be in the form of a plunge bath, in water kept at a temperature of about 70° F., or a hot tub bath with shower. A towel and soap are furnished.

In the newest bath house, the American idea is used, that of having footbaths with the shower and spray. The shower is so arranged that the temperature of the water can be regulated to suit the individual using it. This particular bath house is finished inside in enamel brick and can be flushed down and kept clean. In some cases salt water is used while in others the water is obtained from the regular water supply of the city. The salt water is pumped up from the river and is filtered before using.

The city is now distributing free bath tickets among the poor to be used by the women and their children.

There are first, second, and third class private baths in each bath house, but the latter, the cheapest, are used twice as many times as the first and second class combined, showing that those most in need of such opportunities are taking advantage of them. This is also true of the plunge, of which there is a first and second class, the latter being by far the better patronized. There are also so-called open-air baths which can be used free of cost.

A glance at the inclosed report by the city engineer and chief superintendent will give one an idea of the popularity of these baths and washhouses. During the year 1901 the baths were used 1,379,279 times and the washhouses 188,209 times.

With the public washhouses and baths, the corporation dwellings and the sterilized, humanized milk depots, the city offers many inducements to the poor to keep clean and healthy, but unfortunately among the lower classes the love of strong drink is intense. Liquor takes their money and saps their pride and ambition, and the alehouse is an insuperable barrier between the present miserable condition of the laboring classes and the better state they might be in if that obstruction were removed.

It would be interesting to study along the same lines in some of the other large cities of the United Kingdom, but I am sure that no city does more for its poor than does Liverpool.

Respectfully,

CARROLL FOX,
Assistant Surgeon.

The SURGEON-GENERAL.